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RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 3732
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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0895
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RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 7144
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TASHKENT 001607

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY MAP OF THE WORLD

REF: A. A) TASHKENT 0064 (NOTAL)

[1](#)B. B) TASHKENT 1586 (NOTAL)

Classified By: CDA Brad Hanson for reasons 1.4 B and D.

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In an Independence Day speech to the Tashkent Diplomatic Corps August 28, FM Norov outlined Uzbekistan's foreign policy, rank-ordering relations with five tiers of countries and international organizations. Not surprisingly, he extolled relations with Russia and Russian-supported multilateral organizations. The United States and western European countries fell into the fifth and final tier, softened with an olive branch of willingness to dialogue with these countries where views diverge. Many diplomatic missions have tried to get a copy of the FM's prepared remarks, but MFA is not releasing it, suggesting the FM may feel insecure about some of his remarks, or that the regime did not want to publish it, lest it detract from President Karimov's own Independence Day speeches. End Summary.

2, (SBU) FM Vladimir Norov hosted Chiefs of Mission at a gala reception in a new exhibition hall within sight of Uzbekistan's parliament, the Oliy Majlis, August 28, as part of the GOU's week of 16th independence anniversary celebrations. He read a fifteen minute speech in Russian, interpreted into English from a prepared translation. First half of the speech dealt with forgettable Uzbek aphorisms. Second half of the FM's speech summarized Uzbekistan's foreign relations with five groups of countries and international organizations.

[1](#)3. (SBU) At the top of the list and meriting the longest mention were Russia and the Collective Security and Treaty Organization (CSTO, which Uzbekistan only rejoined upon strong Russian urging in 2006). FM Norov extolled Russia as Uzbekistan's good friend, as an indispensable partner in tackling issues of counterterrorism and counternarcotics, and as an extremely important economic partner. He praised the

CSTO as the major vehicle for economic integration of its member countries.

14. (SBU) In the second tier of foreign partners, the FM mentioned the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and China, but made no mention of any of the other members of the SCO, i.e., Uzbekistan's immediate Central Asian neighbors, or Russia, in the SCO context. He characterized the importance of the SCO and China to Uzbekistan as primarily economic.

5, (SBU) In third rank, Norov mentioned Arab, South Asian, and Asian and Pacific rim countries as especially important for economic issues. He mentioned only South Korea and Japan by name, but he also referred to President Karimov's 2007 state visits to Egypt and Singapore and the recent visits to Tashkent of the Foreign Ministers of Bahrain and Kuwait.

16. (SBU) In the fourth tier were a mixed bag of multilateral, international organizations. The FM acknowledged that the European Union in 2007 had devised a strategy for Central Asia. He stressed the GOU wanted intensified relations with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and unnamed Asian multilateral organizations.

17. (SBU) In the fifth and final tier came Western Europe and the United States. Norov stated the GOU would engage with Germany, France, Italy, Spain (Note: where Uzbekistan recently opened an embassy), other countries in Europe, and the United States of America, wherever natural interests converge. Almost as an afterthought, he added that Uzbekistan was open to dialogue with these countries when views diverge.

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18. (C) Comment: FM Norov's summary rank-ordering of Uzbekistan's foreign relations and priorities in 2007 reflects fairly accurately the GOU's foreign affairs efforts in 2007. Interestingly, the FM made no mention of Afghanistan or any of the Central Asian countries by name, nor did he mention the United Kingdom or Israel, which the UK Charge and the Israeli Ambassador immediately remarked upon to the Charge at the reception, nor to the UN or any of its specialized agencies active in Uzbekistan. Comparing the FM's speech with a document on Uzbekistan's foreign policy priorities purportedly written by the GOU and approved by President Karimov in January (REF A), Russia has replaced Uzbekistan's immediate Central Asian neighbors in first place. Arab and Islamic multilateral organizations have also risen considerably, perhaps because the GOU seeks foreign investment from these countries and burnishment of its Islamic credentials for its domestic audience. The EU and Western European states have fallen from a middle rank to the lowest rank. Unchanged is the United States in the final tier of countries and international organizations, but the U.S. has company now with the Western Europeans.

19. (C) The FM's speech may have been too blunt, too frank, as MFA is refusing to release it. The Embassy, along with many other diplomatic missions, has asked MFA for a copy, which we know exists in written form and in written English translation. Although the FM delivered it in a semi-public venue, he may feel uncomfortable or insecure with something in the speech vis-a-vis the presidential apparatus or even President Karimov, thus accounting for MFA's reluctance to release the text. Nor has there been any reference to this foreign policy speech in any GOU-controlled press organ. Or the regime may have decided simply not to publish a major speech by the FM, lest it divert attention from President Karimov's two major Independence Day speeches (REF B), which commented little on foreign relations and focussed on domestic achievements.

HANSON